

REMARKS

Applicants have amended Claims 1, 10, and 17 and therefore, upon entry of this amendment, Claims 1-22 are pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of the application.

Claims 1-4, 8-12, 14, 16-20, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,768,616 to Mergens et al. [herein referred to as "Mergens"].

Examiner cites Mergens as disclosing a second diode (diode string 2010 of Fig. 20) that is adapted to provide electrostatic discharge protection having a second polarity (OA pg. 3). Applicants respectfully disagree as Mergens sets forth that diode string 2010 is optionally provided to fulfill the conditions given by power-up constraints and latch-up prevention and that diodes 2010 may be minimum in size since only small amounts of trigger currents (as compared to an ESD stress current) are conducted by the silicon controlled rectifier (SCR) 306 (col. 14, lns. 51-57). Thus, diode string 2010 is simply connected to a trigger gate of SCR 306 and does not provide an electrostatic discharge (ESD) path.

Applicants have amended the claims to clarify certain aspects of the present invention. For example, Mergens fails to teach or suggest "a second diode coupled to the supply

voltage line and the transistor and parallel to the first diode, wherein the second diode is adapted to provide electrostatic discharge protection and discharge electrostatic discharge current having a second polarity different than the first polarity" as recited in Claim 1, "wherein the at least second diode is adapted to protect from electrostatic discharge and discharge electrostatic discharge current of a second polarity different than the first polarity" as recited in Claim 10, or "providing at least a second diode coupled to the supply voltage rail and to the transistor to protect from electrostatic discharge by discharging electrostatic discharge current of a second polarity different than the first polarity, wherein the at least first diode and the transistor are implemented in a cascode configuration" as recited in Claim 17.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1, 10, and 17 patentably distinguish over Mergens and that corresponding dependent claims are also distinguishable for at least the same reasons. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) of Claims 1-4, 8-12, 14, 16-20, and 22 be withdrawn.

Claims 5-7, 13, 15, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Mergens in view of Applicant's admitted prior art [herein referred to as "AAPA"].

LAW OFFICES OF
MACPHERSON KWOK
CHEN & HEID LLP

3463 Michelson Drive
SUITE 210
Irvine, CA 92612
(949) 752-7040
FAX (949) 752-7049

Mergens fails to teach or suggest certain aspects of the present invention, as discussed above in reference to Claims 1, 10, and 17, and AAPA fails to cure the deficiencies of Mergens. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1, 10, and 17 patentably distinguish over Mergens in view of AAPA and that corresponding dependent claims are also distinguishable for at least the same reasons. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Claims 5-7, 13, 15, and 21 be withdrawn.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-22 are in proper form for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested and a timely Notice of Allowance is solicited.

If there are any questions regarding any aspect of the application, please call the undersigned at (949) 752-7040.

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Respectfully submitted,

Greg J. Michelson

Greg J. Michelson
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 44,940

LAW OFFICES OF
MACPHERSON KWOK
CHEN & HEID LLP
2400 Michelson Drive
SUITE 218
Irvine, CA 92612
(714) 753-7040
FAX (714) 753-7049